



Clay Community Health Happenings

Nancy J. Mills, Administrator

March 2012

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Clay County Health Department News

Surgeon General Report: Tobacco Industry Still Targeting Kids

The U.S. Surgeon General released a new report last week detailing the state of tobacco industry marketing and the impact on youth and young adults in our nation. The report, *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults*, gives a powerful reminder that the tobacco industry is the main cause of the tobacco epidemic. Specifically, the report states that tobacco marketing causes kids to start and continue using tobacco products, showing that evidence "consistently and coherently points to the intentional marketing of tobacco products to youth as being a cause of young people's tobacco use."

A statement from the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids further illustrates the conclusions of the report:

- "Tobacco marketing today is concentrated in convenience stores and other retail outlets, where tobacco companies spend billions to ensure their products are heavily advertised, displayed prominently and priced cheaply. Two-thirds of teenagers visit convenience stores at least once a week, and studies have found that price discounts and exposure

to tobacco marketing in stores increase youth smoking. (For more information about store marketing, including a slideshow, visit [the] recent report at <http://tfk.org/deadlyalliance>)

- Marketing for smokeless tobacco has skyrocketed by 277 percent since the 1998 settlement, Tobacco companies have introduced an array of colorfully-packaged and sweetly-flavored smokeless tobacco products, including new products that look and dissolve like mints.
- Tobacco companies also have introduced a variety of smaller cigars, called little cigars or cigarillos, with sweet flavors such as grape and strawberry, colorful packaging and cheap prices that make them appealing to kids."

The Clay CHD Tobacco Prevention Program, along with Tobacco Free Clay & SWAT (Students Working Against Tobacco) calls the community to take action. Talk with your children about all types tobacco products and deceptive marketing, be diligent in convenience stores to notice predatory tobacco industry marketing and engage your elected officials to help create a healthy, safe & tobacco-free environment to raise your children.

The Surgeon General's latest report can be found online at www.SurgeonGeneral.gov. More information on tobacco prevention and control activities happening in Clay County is available at www.TobaccoFreeClay.com.

Promising Practice Recognition

Leading a team of Clay County Health Department staff, (Clay CHD) Epidemiology Program Manager, Connie Wolfe received 'Promising Practice' recognition from NACCHO on her submission of "First in Florida STD Text Messaging." After vetting the program through DOH legal counsel and Information Technology staff, Ms. Wolfe and her team implemented a notification system which made it possible for Clay CHD clinical clients to obtain test results for Chlamydia and Gonorrhea via a text coded message sent directly to their cell phones. The STD Text Messaging program was originally developed and tested by the Peoria (IL) Health Department.

Working cooperatively with our medical clinic staff, the team compiled and analyzed pilot data over several months. Results demonstrated improved client outcomes and significant reduction of staff time (and



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subsequent savings), when compared to traditional client notification means.

For more information, the Clay CHD texting policy is available in NACCHO's Toolbox:

<http://www.naccho.org/toolbox/tool.cfm?id=2502>

March 24th is World TB Day

March 24th is the annual World TB Day. This remembers the day Dr. Robert Koch announced the discovery (1882) of Mycobacterium tuberculosis. This is the bacillus that causes Tuberculosis (TB). This day provides Public Health and other health care professionals an opportunity to raise awareness about TB related problems and solutions.

According to the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation, more than nine million people develop active TB each year, and 1.7 million people die from the disease worldwide. The effects of TB have devastating health and economic consequences.

TB is spread through the air from one person to another. The TB bacteria are spread in the air when a person with TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs, sneezes, speaks or sings. Persons close to the infected person may breathe in the TB germ and become infected.

Some symptoms of TB are: a "bad" cough that lasts for more than 3 weeks, weight

loss, no appetite, night sweating, fever. A person is considered at increased risk for TB infection if he/she has HIV infection, was not treated adequately in the past for TB, or has chronic health problems like diabetes.

Since 2006, Clay CHD has reported and treated 18 cases of active Tuberculosis.

In 2010, Florida reported 835 cases of active tuberculosis. Clay CHD continues to work closely with health care providers to diagnose, treat and report active cases of TB. If you have questions about TB please contact your health care provider or call Clay CHD 904-529-2851 or 2852. The Florida Department of Health, Bureau of TB/Refugee Health is also available at http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Disease_ctrl/tb/index.html

Caribbean Circle CHD Fire Response

On March 13th Clay County Health Department Staff teamed up with Clay County Emergency Management to help get residents registered in the County Special Needs database. The Caribbean Circle fire erupted earlier in the week in southern Clay County and there were several homes identified in need of evacuation assistance or potential special needs sheltering.

By noon, Clay CHD had three teams ready to travel to Keystone. After arriving in

Keystone Heights, the teams were provided with addresses, maps, forms, and information for approximately 20 residents. Clay CHD teams went door to door to give residents important information on special needs sheltering and the county's notification system. The residents were reassured that the County was concerned about their personal health and safety. Not all opted to complete the registration forms for special needs sheltering, but they did register in the County notification system, Code Red.

"This is another example of the partnership between the Health Department and County Emergency Management working together to assure the health and safety of Clay residents and visitors," commented Nancy Mills, Health Department Administrator. "Our staff reached out to vulnerable people to ensure they have the knowledge they need to make decisions on what they will do in an emergency." The teams were: Team Leader Leigh Wilsey, Connie Wolfe, Charlene Huntley, Judy Twarog, Stefanie Thomas, Mary Jane McRae and Sue Nelson.

Residents interested in signing up for Clay County's Code Red automatic emergency notification system can do so online at: <http://www.claycountygov.com/codered/>



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